

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4798

INFO USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GERMANY OSD/DSAA/ISA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 3483

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, LI, GV

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON MAAGS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE
UNITED STATES MILITARY MISSION/LIBERIA

REF: (A) STATE 104427; (B) MONROVIA 2592; (C) STATE 107682

1. THIS EMBASSY WISHES TO RESTATE FIRMLY THE IMPLICATIONS
FOR THE FUTURE OF U.S. RELATIONS WITH THE GOL IF UNITED
STATES MILITARY MISSION/LIBERIA IS TERMINATED THROUGH CON-
GRESSIONAL ACTION. WE HAVE NOTED THE STATEMENT IN THE
BREIEFING MEMORANDUM FOR AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG'S VISIT
TO MONROVIA (REF C) THAT THERE ARE BILLS IN BOTH HOUSES OF
CONGRESS WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE ASSIGNMENT OF UP TO SIX
MILITARY PERSONNEL TO A SUCCESSOR MISSION IN LIBERIA.
IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT ONLY NATIONS WITH LARGE FMS
PROGRAMS WOULD ELIGIBLE FOR A COMPLEMENT OF SIX AND
THAT A SUCCESSOR MISSION IN LIBERIA WOULD PROBABLY BE COM-
POSED OF THREE PERSONS. SUCH A REDUCED MISSION WOULD NOT
RPT NOT BE ABLE TO PERFORM ADVISORY FUNCTIONS IN ADDITION
TO ITS FMS RESPONSIBILITIES.

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2. THE EMBASSY HAS REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED THROUGH PRE-
VIOUS PARAS, THE RECENT PARM AND THROUGH SPECIFIC MES-
SAGES, THE MOST RECENT OF WHICH IS REFTEL (B), THE IM-
PORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE GOL TO THE CONTINUED PRESENCE
IN LIBERIA OF A US MILITARY ADVISORY MISSION. ALTHOUGH
THIS MISSION IS SMALL (NONE OFFICERS AND NONCOMMISSIONED

OFFICERS), IT IS VIEWED BY THE GOL AS SYMBOLIC OF THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN THE US AND THE GOL AND AS ONE FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY STRUCTURE OF LIBERIA.

3. THE DEPTH OF GOL FEEFLING ON THIS SUBJECT IS SHOWN BY THE FOLLOWING DIRECT QUOTE FROM REMARKS BY PRESIDENT TOLBERT TO AMBASSADOR CARTER ON MAY 6 MADE IN THE CONTEXT OF A FORMAL DISCUSSION OF GOL PLANS TO IMPROVE THE EFFICACY OF ITS ARMED FORCES: "...I WISH TO EXPRESS TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THAT LIBERIA WOULD WANT THE CONTINUATION OF THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE MISSION AFTER 1981. WE FEEL THAT THIS ASSISTANCE IS NECESSARY WHEN WE ARE EMBARRASING ON A MORE VIGOROUS TRAINING PROGRAM AND TRYING TO UP GRADE THE ARMY. WITHDRAWING THAT ASSISTANCE WOULD BE MOST EMBARRASSING. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT YOU WERE ABANDONING US IN MIDSTREAM. RATHER THAN DROWN YOU HAVE TO REACH FOR OTHER HELP AND MAYBE HAVE TO GRASP AT THE WRONG THING. WE ARE MAKING IT A MATTER OF RECORD NOW."

4. PUT ITS MOST BALD TERMS, THE ISSUE IS THIS: THE US NATIONAL INTEREST DERIVES SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGE FROM FACILITIES OFFERED TO THE US ON LIBERIAN SOIL BY THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT. THESE INCLUDE OUR AREA TELECOMMUNICATIONS OFFICE, KEY TO US DIPLOMATIC AND OTHER SENSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS IN AFRICA, AND PARTS OF OTHER AREAS; THE VOA TRANSMITTER FOR ALL OF AFRICA, AND PARTS OF EASTERN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA AND ASA; AND ONE OF EIGHT STATIONS IN THE WORLD-WIDE OMEGA NAVIGATION SYSTEM. IN ADDITION, THE US BY FORMAL AGREEMENT HAS ACCESS RIGHTS TO ROBERTSFIELD

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IN A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, RIGHTS WHICH IN PRACTICE HAVE BEEN GRANTED WHEN NEEDED BY THE US TO FACILITATE PROJECTION OF ITS POWER DURING SPECIFIC AFRICAN SITUATIONS (FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE CASE OF THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM AND CURRENTLY IN THE ZAIRE SITUATION). THE CURRENT US CONTRIBUTION TO LIBERIA INCLUDES MODEST FOREIGN MILITARY SALES (FMS) SUPPORT OF \$500,000 ANNUALLY; ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE OF APPROXIMATELY \$12-\$15 MILLION FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR; ABOUT 250 PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS; AND THE MILITARY MISSION.

5. IF NO AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE US MILITARY MISSION IN LIBERIA IS PASSED BY CONGRESS, THE GOL WILL REGARD THIS AS A PLAIN INDICATION THAT THE US DOES NOT VALUE EITHER ITS FRIENDSHIP WITH LIBERIA NOR THE SUPPORT GIVEN BY LIBERIA TO US INTERESTS IN AFRICA.

6. IF AUTHORIZATION IS GRANTED FOR CONTINUATION OF THE US MILITARY MISSION BUT THE MISSION IS OBLIGED TO DISCONTINUE ITS ADVISORY FUNCTION, RESTRICTING ITSELF TO ADMINISTERING

THE FMS PROGRAMS, THE HARMFUL IMPACT UPON THE GOL WILL BE ALMOST AS BAD. THERE ARE NOW SEVEN OFFICERS WITHIN THE USMM ENGAGED IN ADVISORY WORK, IN ADDITION TO THEIR FMS AND INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IMET) FUNCTIONS. THE CHIEF OF THE MILITARY MISSION, AN ARMY COLONEL, IS RELIED UPON BY THE GOL MINISTER OF DEFENSE FOR GUIDANCE ON PLANS AND POLICY MATTERS RELATING TO IMPROVING THE ORGANIZATION, TRAINING AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ARMED FORCES OF LIBERIA. HE IS ALSO CONSULTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF LOBERIA AND THE GOL NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL ON THESE MATTERS. A USMM LIEUTENANT COLONEL ACTS AS ADVISOR TO THE ARMED FORCES OF LIBERIA (AFL) ON STAFF OPERATIONS IN THE FIELDS OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, INTELLIGENCE, OPERATIONS, TRAINING, AND LOGISTICS. A SECOND LIEUTENANT COLONEL IS THE ADVISOR TO THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE ONLY TACTICAL BRIGADE IN THE AFL. TWO MAJORS ACT AS ADVISORS TO THE TRAINING COMMAND AND ENGINEER

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COMMAND, RESPECTIVELY, AND CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER PROVIDES DETAILED ADVICE ON DEPOT OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE. A NAVY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER IS DESIGNATED AS ADVISOR TO THE LIBERIAN COAST GUARD IN WHICH ROLE HE HAS AS COUNTERPART THE ASSISTANT MINISTER OF DEFENSE FOR COAST GUARD AFFAIRS.

7. IN SUMMATION, THE PRESENT SMALL US MILITARY MISSION IS HEIR TO A TRADITION OF CLOSE AND CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND LIBERIAN ARMED FORCES DATING BACK TO THE EARLY 1900S AND ONE ASPECT OF THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. ITS WITHDRAWAL, OR THE CURTAILMENT OF ITS ADVISORY FUNCTIONS, WOULD BE REGARDED AS AN AFFRONT AND AS AN INDICATION THAT THE US DOES NOT VALUE THE ADVANTAGES DERIVED FROM THIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP. FOR OUR PART WE WOULD BE LOSING A SIGNIFICANT AVENUE FOR EXERTING US INFLUENCE IN GOL DEFENSE COUNCILS.

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